Professor: Face-Reading AI Will Now Detect Your Politics And IQ

The same professor who claims that AI can identify whether you are gay or straight is now convinced that he can nail your politics and IQ as well. If even remotely true, Orwellian Technocrats will have a heyday. ⊓ TN Editor

Professor whose study suggested technology can detect whether a person is gay or straight says programs will soon reveal traits such as criminal predisposition

Voters have a right to keep their political beliefs private. But according to some researchers, it won't be long before a computer program can accurately guess whether people are liberal or conservative in an instant. All that will be needed are photos of their faces.

Michal Kosinski – the Stanford University professor who went viral last week for research suggesting that artificial intelligence (AI) can detect [whether people are gay or straight based on photos](#) – said sexual orientation was just one of many characteristics that algorithms would be able to predict through facial recognition.

Using photos, AI will be able to identify people's political views, whether they have high IQs, whether they are predisposed to criminal behavior, whether they have specific personality traits and many other private, personal details that could carry huge social consequences, he said.

Kosinski outlined the extraordinary and sometimes disturbing applications of facial detection technology that he expects to see in the near future, raising complex ethical questions about the erosion of privacy and the possible misuse of AI to target vulnerable people.

"The face is an observable proxy for a wide range of factors, like your life history, your development factors, whether you're healthy," he said.

Faces contain a significant amount of information, and using large datasets of photos, sophisticated computer programs can uncover trends and learn how to distinguish key traits with a high rate of accuracy. With Kosinski's "gaydar" AI, an algorithm used online dating photos to create a program that could correctly identify sexual orientation 91% of the time with men and 83% with women, just by reviewing a handful of photos.

Kosinski's research is highly controversial, and faced a [huge backlash from LGBT rights groups](#), which argued that the AI was flawed and that anti-LGBT governments could use this type of software to out gay people and persecute them. Kosinski and other researchers, however, have [argued](#) that powerful governments and corporations already possess these technological capabilities and that it is vital to expose possible dangers in an effort to push for privacy protections and regulatory safeguards, which have not kept pace with AI.

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